

Public Notice – Environmental Project

PURPOSE OF NOTICE:

The Department of Environmental Quality seeks public comment on the state's response to the environmental aspects of a proposed project in Virginia coastal waters.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

December 2, 2011 to December 16, 2011

TYPE OF RESPONSE:

Federal Consistency Determination

DEQ is reviewing a proposed federal action to determine if it is consistent with the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program (VCP) established pursuant to the U.S. Coastal Zone Management Act. The VCP seeks to protect the quality of air, water or other natural resources in Virginia's coastal area.

NAME OF AGENCY PROPOSING THE PROJECT :

DOC/NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has developed a Secretarial Amendment for the small-mesh multispecies fishery which is part of the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The Secretarial Amendment includes provisions for annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs). The small-mesh multispecies fishery is composed of five stocks of three species of hakes (northern silver hake, southern silver hake, northern red hake, southern red hake, and offshore hake), and the fishery is managed primarily through a series of exemptions from the broader regulations governing the Northeast multispecies fishery. The Secretarial Amendment proposes: (1) an overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch, and ACL framework; (2) stock area total allowable landings (TALs); (3) a post-season AM of a pound-for-pound payback of any ACL overage; and (4) an in-season AM that would reduce the possession limit of a stock to an incidental level (400 lb of red hake, 1,00 lb for silver and offshore hake combined) when 90 percent that stock's TAL is projected to be harvested. NMFS has submitted a federal consistency determination that finds the proposed action consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the enforceable policies of the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program.

HOW TO COMMENT:

DEQ accepts comments from the public by e-mail, fax or postal mail. All comments must include the name, address and telephone number of the person commenting and be received by DEQ within the comment period. The public may review the project documents at DEQ's central office in Richmond.

CONTACT FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS, DOCUMENT REQUESTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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